

HUGH JOSEPH WEBSTER.

VX23821, PRIVATE HUGH JOSEPH WEBSTER, 2/22nd Battalion, D Company, being duly sworn, states:-

I am VX23821, Private Hugh Joseph Webster, 2/22nd Battalion, D Company.

I went to RABAUL with the 2/22 Battalion and was there till after the Japanese landing.

After the Japanese landing the Company retired into the bush and I went with it, and I made my way down to the South Coast with other members of the Battalion.

We arrived in the vicinity of TOL about February the 3rd, in the late afternoon. There were eight in our party, all of the 2/22.

On arrival at TOL we set about trying to get some food. We got a sheep and a bit of corn and cooked it. We slept the night in a native hut in the TOL Plantation. There were eight of us in the hut.

Next morning we ate for breakfast what food was left from the night before, and lay down again. There was a river ahead, and we were trying to organise a crossing of the river. While we were lying on the bunks there was a bit of a commotion outside. We went out to have a look and looked out to sea and could see sampans out in the bay. We packed all our stuff in a hurry and went into the bush again. On the way to the bush we heard a type of mortar firing. We slept in the bush on the night of the 4th.

In the morning, it was our idea that the Japs would not stay long, so we posted two sentries to watch the Japs at the native huts. The sentries came rushing back and said a Japanese patrol was coming up. The patrol surrounded us and took us prisoners. We had picked up three more men by this time and were a party of eleven, and the only arms in the party was a revolver carried by Cpl. Walker. The Japs surrounded us and took us prisoner at about 9 or 10 in the morning. They made a search of the surrounding bush to see if there were any more and then took us to Japanese headquarters at WAITAVLO.

There was only our party at the Japanese headquarters at WAITAVLO at the time. There they gave us two sheets of paper. We had to sign our names and numbers twice. They took our identification discs from us and also all our personal belongings. Then they tied our hands behind our backs with rope and marched us just up behind WAITAVLO House, about 200 yards. There was a big group of Japanese at the Headquarters, cleaning machine guns and rifles and doing odd jobs and the Japanese that went with us behind WAITAVLO House numbered between 20 and 30.

There was a bit of cliff and they lined us up along that. They would not let us face them. We were not linked together. They then opened on us with rifles and light machine guns. I was wounded in the arm and side and fell down and lost consciousness.

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H.J. Webster. (cont.)

I eventually recovered consciousness, and the Japs had gone. On recovering consciousness, I definitely saw the other ten of my mates lying there on the ground. I examined them and found that private Walkley was still alive. I got him to his feet and he and I went down into a bit of a gully. We were there for about three days. We then decided to set off, and we went through the thick bush. Walkley was in pretty bad condition. I was going ahead and missed him. I came back to find him, sang out and looked for him, but I was not able to find him at all and I thought he must have died in the bush.

I then went on by myself. While going on by myself I had only gone a short distance when I came on a number of bodies of other victims. I could not say definitely the number but, on a rough estimate, there would be about eight or nine. They were covered with coconut fronds. They were definitely Australian troops. I did not see them sufficiently to identify them.

I was eventually picked up by a party with Col. Scanlon and ultimately came out on the south coast with Major Palmer and Major Owen. I made a quick recovery from my bullet wounds.

I did not see anything which might have given the Japanese any ground for attack on our party. We were an unarmed party as far as they were concerned. We even threw away the revolver before they came up.

There was a Japanese officer who spoke English. I did not see any officer with them dressed in Australian uniform. There were local natives working for the Japanese at the headquarters.

I have given the names of my party to Records.

The evidence is read over to the witness.

(Sgd.) HUGH J. WEBSTER.

Certified true copy.

T. F. MacNamee
.....Lieut. Col.
Australian Military Forces.

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證據書類第五三一三號

ヒュ！。デヨセフ。エフ。スタ！

第二ノ二大隊、D中隊ノVX二三、八二一號、ヒュ！。デヨセフ。エフ。スタ！
セフ。ウエブスター！ 兵卒ハ、正式宣言ノ上、次ノ如
ク眞述ス。

私ハ第二ノ二大隊、D中隊ノVX二三、八二一
號、ヒュ！。デヨセフ。エフ。スタ！
兵卒テ
アリマス。私ハ第二ノ二大隊所屬テ「ラバウル」
ニ行キ、日本軍ノ上陸迄同所ニ居リマシタ。

日本軍ノ上陸後、中隊ハ宿舎中ニ退却シ、私モ
中隊ト行動ヲ共ニシ、ソレカラ大陸ノ者ト共ニ、
南岸ヘ下リマシタ。

我々ハ、二月三日頃午後過ク「トル」附近ニ到
着シマシタ。我々ノ一行ハ八人テ、皆第二ノ二大
隊ノ者テアリマシタ。

「トル」ニ到着スルヤ、我々ハ食糧獲得ニ着手
シマシタ。我々ハ羊ト少シ許リノ玉蜀黍ヲ手ニ入
レ、ソレヲ料理シマシタ。我々ハ「トル」農園ノ
原住民小屋テ其ノ夜ハ眠リマシタ。小屋ニハ我々
八人ガ居ツタノテス。

翌朝、我々ハ昨夜食べ残シタ食物ヲ朝食ニシ、
ソシテ再び横ニナリマシタ。前方ニ川ガアリ、我

1.

々ハソノ川ヲ渡ル工夫ヲシヨウトシマシタ。様子ヲ見ヨウト外へ出テ、海ノ方ヲ見渡シマスト。海内ニ「サンバン」ガハツキリ眼ニ入りマシタ。我々ハ急イテ一切ノ荷物ヲ一マトメニシ、再ビ密林中ニ入りマシタ。密林ニ赴ク途中デ、我々ハ白砲ヲ尋ツタラシイ音ヲ聞キマシタ。我々ハ四日ノ夜ハ、密林中デ眠リマシタ。

朝、日本軍ハ、長ク留ル事ハアルマイ、ド考エテ、我々ハ原住民小屋ニキタ日本軍監視ノタメ、二名ノ歩哨ヲ配置シマシタ。歩哨ハ走リ戻ツテ來テ、日本兵斥候隊ガヤツテ來ルト言イマシタ。其ノ斥候ガ我々ヲ包囲シ、捕虜トシタノデアリマス。此ノ時迄ニ、我々ハ、尙三人ヲ加工テ居マシタノデ、一行ハ十一人デアリマシタ。ソシテ我々一行中ノ唯一ノ武器ハ「ウォーカー」伍長ノ携行スル拳銃デアリマシタ。日本兵ハ我々ヲ包囲シ、其ノ朝ノ九時カ十時頃、我々ヲ捕らトシタノデアリマス。彼等ハ、未だ居リハセヌカヲ謂ベルタメ、周囲ノ密林ノ搜索ヲ行ヒ、然ル後、我々ヲ「ワイタヴロ」ノ日本軍司令部ニ進行シマシタ。

其ノ時ニハ、「ワイタヴロ」ノ日本軍司令部ニハ、我々一行ノミシカ居リマセんデシタ。其處デ彼等ハ、我々ニ二枚ノ紙ヲ渡シマシタ。我々ハ我

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タノ右前ト番號ヲ二度右石セバナリマセンテシタ。彼等ハ我々カラ認識系ラ有ヒ、私物一切ヲ沒收シマシタ。ソレカラ彼等ハ銅テ、我々ヲ後手ニ縛リ、「ワイタヴロ」邸宅ノ向フ迄約二百ヤードヲ這レテ行キマシタ。司令部ニハ日本兵ガ澤山居リ、機關銃ヤ小銃ヲ掃除シタリ、其他何ヤ彼ヤト仕事ヲシテ居リ、我々ト一組ニ「ワイタヴロ」邸宅ノ向フヘ來ヌ日本兵ハ、二十八人カラ三十八人ヲ數エマシタ。

少シ砲壁ニナツタ所ガアリ、彼等ハソノ砲壁ニ沿ツテ我々整列サセマシタ。彼等ハ我々ヲ彼等ト向イ合セズ、我々ハ一組ニ集ガレハシマセンテシタ。ソレカラ彼等ハ、我々ニ對シテ、小銃ト軽機銃ヲ發射シマシタ。私ハ既ト頬腹ニ負傷シテ倒レ、意識ヲ失ヒマシタ。

私ハ終ニ意識ヲ回復シマシタ。日本兵ハ既ニ云ツテ居リマシタ。意識ノ回復スルヤ、私ハ地上ニ倒タハツテキル他ノ十八ノ友ヲハツキリト見マシタ。私ハ彼等ノ生死ヲ松ベマシタ。ソシテ「ウオ! クリ!」一兵卒方未ダ生キテキル事ヲ知リマシタ。私ハ彼ヲ立タセ、彼ト私ハ小サナ谷ニ下リマシタ。我々ハ三日許り其處ニ居リマシタ。ソレカラ我々ハ、云ラント渙心シ、深イ密林ヘ入りマシタ。「ウオ! クリ!」ノ体ノ調子ハカナリ悪カツ

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タノテス。私ハ先ニ立ツテ歩イテキル中ニ彼ヲ見失ヒマシタ。私ハ彼ヲ探しニ戻リ、大聲テ呼び、探し求メマシタガ、遠ニ見付ケ出スコトガ出来バ私ハ彼ガ密林中テ死ンダニ遠イナイト思ヒマシタ。

ソレカラハ私ハ只一人テ行キマシタ。只一人テ歩イテキル時、餘り遠ク行カナイ中ニ、私ハ他ノ犠牲者ノ轟ツカノ死体ニ遭遇シマシタ。ハツキリト其ノ轟ヲ聞フ事ハ出来マセンガ、大体ノ見憶リテハ、八、九人テアリマシタ。其ノ死体ハ都子ノ葉テ巣ハレテアリマシタ。彼等ハ馬カニ「オ！ス」トライリヤー車ノ兵テシタ。私ハ彼等ヲ識別スルタメニ充分ニ死体ヲ見マセンテシタ。私ハ終ニ「スキヤンロン」大佐ノ一郎ニ訊ハレ、結局、ハバルマ！」少佐及ビ「オ！エン」少佐ト共ニ南岸ニ通り着キマシタ。私ノ安ケタ張着ハ、遠カニ同復シマシタ。

私ハ、我々一行ヲ攻撃スル何カノ理由ヲ日本軍ニ與エタヨウナ事ハ一切知エマセンテシタ。我々ハ彼等ニ取ツテハ、非武攻撃テシタ。我々ハ彼等ノ來ル以前ニ、等銃サエ放棄シテシマツタノテス。

英語ヲ話ス日本軍尉校ガ居リマシタ。私ハ「ガ！」ストライヤー車ノ着服ヲ着タ尉校ヲ、彼等ノ中ニ一人モ見マセンテシタ。司令部テハ、日本軍ノタメニ優ラク地方原任民ガ居リマシタ。

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私ハ、私ノ一行ノ姓名ヲ記念係リニ屬ケマシタ。

謹以右紙ハ證人ニ對シテ記聞カセラレタリ。

ヒューラウエースター(右名)

眞實ナル爲本ナルコトヲ證明ス

新潟監査中社 T. P. モリネイン/右名/